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ABSTRACT

The conduct of public education in New York State is a collaborative enterprise involving the Governor and Legislature, the Regents and the Commissioner of Education, and local boards of education. Although a decentralized system has given limited ability to the State Education Department, Legislature, and Governor to direct the use of funds or to know the specific purposes for which the funds are being spent, the Regents continue to support local autonomy. An analysis of trends in education from 1977 to 1983 reveals the following: (1) an emphasis on standards had increased; (2) standards had sagged; (3) America's competitiveness was questioned; and (4) in New York State, educational decline was exacerbated by a fiscal crisis in New York City (NYC). The following Regents/Department initiatives are discussed: (1) testing for competency standards; (2) reallocating Department resources; (3) developing programs for handicapped children; (4) establishing teaching as a profession; (5) directing attention to NYC; (6) linking schools with employment; (7) strengthening bilingual education; (8) directing vocational funds to cities; and (9) monitoring NYC schools. The implementation of the Regents Action Plan since 1984 is discussed. Problems and challenges are reviewed. Trends in monitoring are analyzed. Data are exhibited in 10 figures. Appendices provide discussions of the Fleischmann Commission and the Rubin Commission, both of which covered aspects of educational finance. (BJV)

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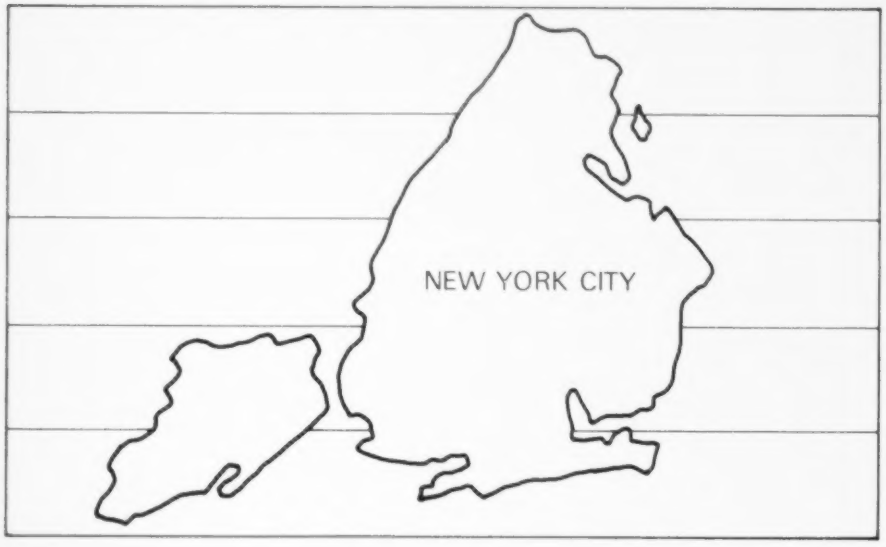

The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
Albany, New York
July 1988

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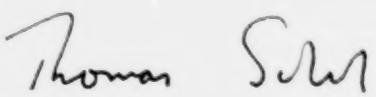
PREFACE

As a still relatively new Commissioner, my head is in the future, not the past. However, knowledge of the past can help us understand the present and guide our planning for the future. So even as we re-deploy our resources and re-direct our efforts to engage more effectively with the New York City school system, this retrospective look at the work of the past ten years may shed new light.

This report was prepared chiefly by State Education Department staff members who served throughout the reported period. I am indebted to them for their information, their insight, and their counsel.



THOMAS SOBOL
Commissioner of Education

FOREWORD

In an attempt to deal with the sheer magnitude of the City's population, various requirements imposed on schools were handled separately for New York City public schools.

A growing skepticism developed in the educational system that discouraged State and local teamwork

The dropout rate rose and employers complained that high school graduates lacked minimum basic skills

Over the past decade, one of the most notable trends in education has been an increased emphasis on standards. Nationally and in New York State, our society has demanded stronger academic expectations and performance and insisted on greater accountability for federal, state, and local dollars spent on all forms of education. This was a marked contrast with the expectations of the educational system during the 1960's and early 1970's when student achievement was sacrificed in favor of student choice at a time when societal values were being challenged. America's competitive ability was questioned and the essential link between education and the economy was acknowledged as the near-collapse of the auto industry showed how vulnerable traditional industries were in the face of lower-cost foreign competition.

In New York State, the educational decline of the late '60's was exacerbated by a fiscal crisis in New York City. The crisis hit the City's recently decentralized school system particularly hard, with extensive layoffs of newly recruited teachers and a shrinkage of staff and faculty at City University. As total expenditures declined to New York City schools, dropout rates rose. Qualified teachers were increasingly hard to find and the percentage of New York City public school teachers teaching out of certification began to grow. A student body composed of students living in poverty, minority students and students from families that speak another language at home became the norm rather than the exception.

Perhaps in an attempt to deal with the sheer magnitude of the City's population, various requirements imposed on schools statewide—such as requirements for health and safety, facilities and teacher licensing—were handled separately and locally for New York City public schools. Governance and fiscal and legal accountability for the schools were targeted to community school districts and the Central Board of Education to the exclusion of State-level officials. A growing skepticism developed in the educational system which discouraged State and local effort and the effective use of resources for the benefit of New York City public school children. The dropout rate rose and employers complained that even high school graduates lacked minimum basic skills necessary to perform their lowest level jobs.

The Board of Regents took the challenge of educational reform seriously. The Regents acknowledged that any meaningful reform must simultaneously raise standards for students, teachers and schools. Starting in the late 1970's, the Regents established basic skill competency requirements for receipt of a high school diploma and requirements for remediation for those who were not making satisfactory progress toward high school completion. Students were required to meet further

Increased interest by the Governor and Legislature have helped to focus attention on ways to ensure that the educational system effectively provides all students with a sound basic education.

Starting with a few basic principles, the Regents developed the Action Plan, exerted pressures simultaneously on students, teachers and schools, and brought public attention to schools with the greatest needs.

instructional and testing requirements in 1984 with the implementation of the Regents Action Plan. Teachers were required to be reviewed annually according to standard procedures and to complete a statewide examination for provisional certification. State funding was available to increase teacher salaries and to pilot mentor teacher-internships for first year teachers. Schools were required to prepare student discipline plans and guidance plans and to review annual student performance reports with their boards. Schools with the poorest performing students were required to conduct comprehensive school improvement planning.

The State Education Department's identification of schools with the greatest proportion of low-performing students was a clear indication that serious problems existed in the New York City public school system. Of 504 school buildings identified in 1985, 393 were from New York City public schools. It was acknowledged that low student performance is not entirely outside the control of the school. Many realized that public schools could be more effective in both their traditional roles and in new roles of providing more comprehensive educational, social and recreational services to the community. Increased interest by the Governor and Legislature have helped to focus attention on ways to ensure that the educational system effectively provides all students with a sound basic education.

The overall strategy of the Regents and State Education Department over the past decade represents an iterative process. Starting with a few basic principles–increased responsibility and accountability for student performance with clearly stated goals and encouragement for local initiative and control–the Regents developed the Action Plan, exerted pressures simultaneously on students, teachers and schools, and brought public attention to schools with the greatest needs. This report captures the details of this iterative process from 1977 to 1988. The process is constantly evolving.

Currently the strategy is being refined and strengthened to directly address the problems of New York City public schools. We are determined to devote the time, energy and resources to New York City which circumstances warrant. As this report shows, this effort is already well under way. During the past year we have sought, secured and assigned additional staff to monitor New York City operations and to provide technical assistance to them; we are seeking changes in law which will enable the State to exercise its authority more directly on certain City school matters; we have collaborated with New York City school personnel on such projects as coordinated monitoring of schools, development of a computerized student identification system, and creation of prototype "community schools;" we have organized a citizens committee to make recommendations concerning the effective discharge of the State's responsibility for the City school system. During the coming years we shall expand upon these efforts.

I. Public Education: Three Key Players

The conduct of public education in New York State is a collaborative enterprise involving a combination of State and local authority.

The conduct of public education in New York State is a collaborative enterprise involving a combination of State and local authority. Three key players in this enterprise are the Legislature, the State Education Department, and local boards of education, each of which must bear its share of responsibility for results.

- *The Governor and Legislature* decide how much money the State will spend each year on public education, how much will be distributed to each locality, and to a large degree, the purposes for which the money will be spent. They also enact laws concerning public education – some of them of fundamental importance, like those concerning the number of days children are to attend school and the subjects they will study.

- *The Regents and the Commissioner of Education* set standards of educational equity and excellence; provide a context of rules and regulations within which local school districts operate; monitor the expenditure of State aid categorical funds authorized by the Legislature to see that they are spent as the Legislature intended; provide technical assistance to school districts to help them achieve mutually desired outcomes; and, analyze the results of State and local efforts to determine whether the desired outcomes have been achieved and recommend modifications as necessary.

- *Local boards of education*, in most school districts, certify to their respective municipalities the amount of money to be raised in taxes. The Legislature also grants boards of education broad powers for operating the schools. In the language of the law, theirs is the power "to have in all respects the superintendence, management and control of...(the) schools."

Decentralization: A Long Tradition

The long tradition of local control of public education was upheld as recently as 1982 by the New York State Court of Appeals, whose decision in *Levittown v. Nyquist* contained this passage:

"For all of the nearly two centuries that New York has had public schools, it has utilized a statutory system whereby citizens at the local level, acting as part of school district units containing people with a community of interest and a tradition of acting together to govern themselves, have made the basic decisions on funding and operating their own schools. Through the years, the people of this State have remained true to the concept that the maximum support of

Unlike all other school districts in the State except Buffalo, New York City licenses its own teachers.

Fiscal dependency has meant that increases in State aid to the City schools have not always provided additional money for educational programs.

the public schools and the most informed, intelligent and responsive decision-making as to the financing and operation of those schools is generated by giving citizens direct and meaningful control over the schools that their children attend."

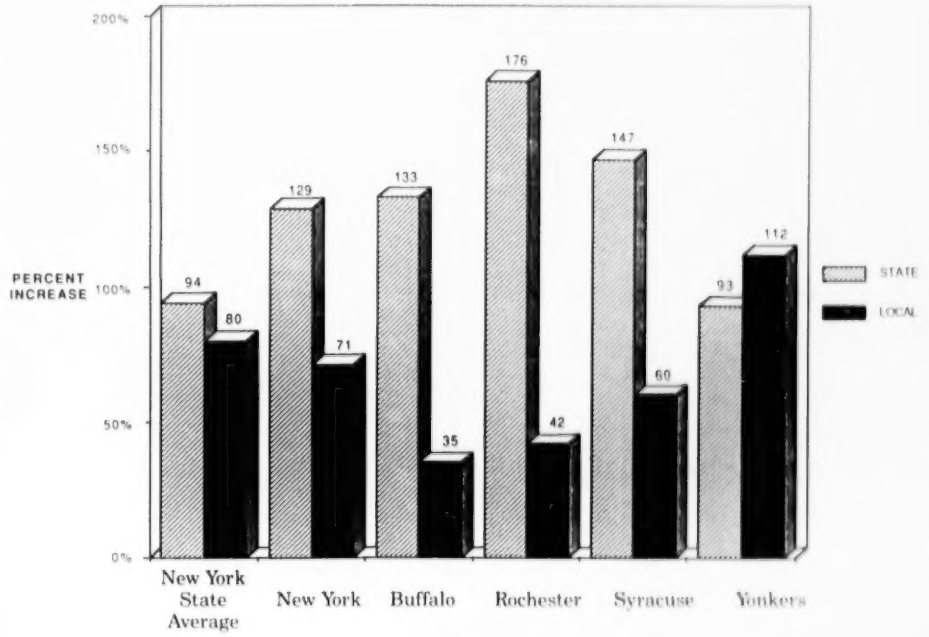
In an effort to address decentralized authority in New York City, the Legislature created in 1969 a system of community school districts which share authority with the Central Board of Education, and the Legislature has exempted the City School District from the need to meet certain State requirements. For example, unlike all other school districts in the State except Buffalo, New York City licenses its own teachers; the City Health Department in conjunction with other health care providers, rather than local boards of education as in the rest of the State, provides health programs in the schools; and New York City is exempt by law from Regulations of the Commissioner of Education concerning annual fire inspections and the approval of building plans and specifications.

Fiscal Dependency

Fiscal and program accountability are obscured by two structural elements of New York City school organization: school district fiscal dependency on the City government and community district budgeting and fiscal reporting.

New York City's Board of Education is fiscally dependent on the City of New York government for receipt of all revenues – Federal, State and local. City budget makers can change the impact of revenues to the schools from Federal or State sources by limiting, withdrawing, or retargeting local tax levy support. Fiscal dependency has meant that increases in State aid to the City schools have not always provided additional money for educational programs. The City has used additional State money to limit what would otherwise have been increases in City support of the school program. There has been substitution of

EXHIBIT 1 **PERCENT INCREASE IN STATE AND LOCAL REVENUES FOR EDUCATION**
1976-77 THROUGH 1985-86



unrestricted State and Federal aid for City tax levy commitment.

This substitution of State funds for local commitment has occurred variously in other large city, dependent districts, as well. Exhibit 1 shows an average statewide increase in State revenues to school districts of 94 percent while local revenues increased 80 percent statewide. In New York City, State revenues increased above the State average (129 percent) and local revenues increased slightly below the State average (71 percent). In Buffalo, State revenues increased 133 percent; local revenues, in contrast, increased by only 35 percent with an accompanying ten-year tax rate decrease of ten percent as shown in Exhibit 3.

These figures should be interpreted within the context of the overall economic condition of these cities. A concomitant decline in the economic health of most of these cities was evidenced by the fact that all fiscally dependent districts, except Syracuse, experienced below average full property value growth during the decade.

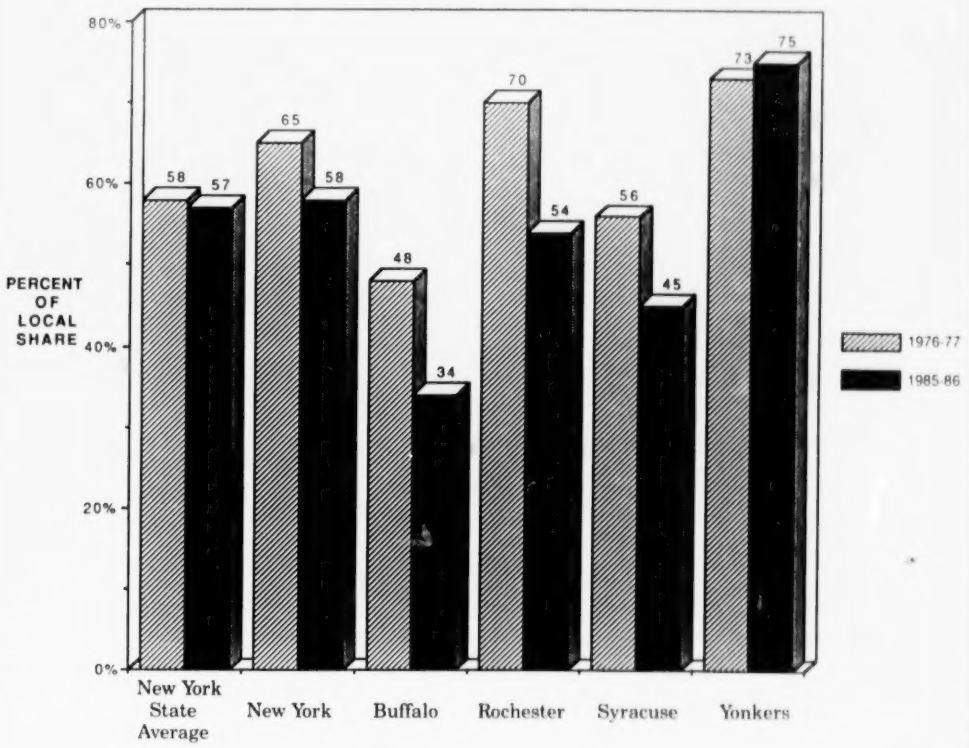
Exhibit 2 shows the percent of local share of education costs for each of the Big Five cities and the State as a whole in 1976-77 and 1985-86. Exhibit 3 shows the tax rate in 1976-77 and 1985-86, the increase and the percent increase in tax rate for each of the Big Five cities and the State as a whole. It can be said that New York City's local efforts to support

This substitution of State funds for local commitment has occurred variously in other large city, dependent districts, as well.

An important part of the operation of the educational system has been the maintenance of local initiative and control.

EXHIBIT 2 **PERCENT OF LOCAL SHARE OF EDUCATION COSTS**

1976-77 AND 1985-86



Such a system has given limited ability to the State Education Department, Legislature and Governor to direct the use of funds or to know the specific purposes for which funds are being spent.

The principle of decentralization or local control has been important to many Regents initiatives.

The Regents continue to support a State program that provides for the authority and control as close as possible to those operating the programs.

EXHIBIT 3

TAX RATE IN 1976-77 AND 1985-86 INCREASE AND PERCENT INCREASE FOR THE LARGE FIVE CITIES AND NEW YORK STATE

	1976-77	1985-86	Increase	Percent Increase
New York City	21.28	25.25	3.97	18.68
Buffalo	22.40	20.21	−2.20	− 9.81
Rochester	28.01	29.78	1.77	6.31
Syracuse	21.35	21.15	−0.19	− 0.91
Yonkers	18.12	25.84	7.72	42.59
New York State Average	21.77	24.88	2.71	12.47

its schools have been sustained by an 18.68 percent tax increase, above the 12.47 percent for all districts on the average during the ten-year period. For three other fiscally dependent districts tax rate changes for the period were: Buffalo, −9.8 percent; Rochester, 6.3 percent; and Syracuse, −1 percent.

Under the City's decentralization system, the unit of accountability is the community school district or high school division rather than the individual school building. State categorical and other funds are allocated to community school districts or the Central Board of Education for assignment to schools. An important part of the operation of the educational system has been the maintenance of local initiative and control. Although this has had many advantages, such a system has given limited ability to the State Education Department, Legislature and Governor to direct the use of funds or to know the specific purposes for which funds are being spent. This system has also not allowed for the tracking of students across community school districts or across districts.

While the principle of decentralization or local control has been important to many Regents initiatives, the Regents new Comprehensive Assessment Report (CAR) and the Comprehensive School Improvement Planning (CSIP) process are based at the building level. These initiatives involve a significant State role to promote accountability and educational reform – through promulgating requirements for local activities, the uniform compilation of student performance data, technical assistance and monitoring. The review of student data, budgeting and the planning and implementation of school improvement activities that result are determined and conducted at the school building and district levels by local staff. The Regents support a State program that provides for local authority and control over educational programs but also seeks to establish building level fiscal and program accountability. The Department has sought and received State aid to build with the New York City Board a new computer management system that will speed fiscal and program accountability at the building level.

The Regents approach throughout their more than two centuries of involvement in education in the State of New York has been to be knowledgeable about problems; establish goals; and build upon the system that encourages local initiative and control.

II. Trends in Education: 1977-1983

The context for Regents and Department initiatives in New York City during 1977-1983 was created by a number of trends in education.

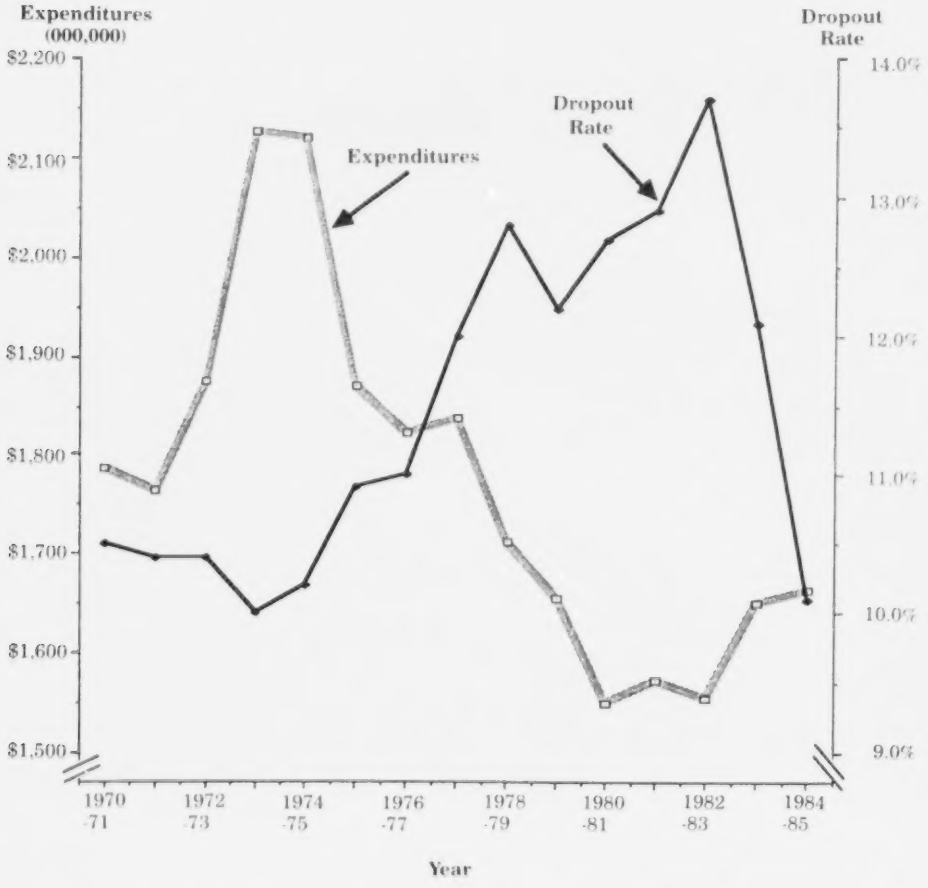
An Increased Emphasis on Standards

Perhaps the most significant trend in education from the mid-1970's to today has been an increased emphasis on standards. Nationally, and in New York, our society has demanded stronger academic expectations and performance and insisted on greater accountability for federal, state, and local dollars spent on all forms of education.

Nationally, and in New York, our society has demanded stronger academic expectations and performance and insisted on greater accountability.

EXHIBIT 4

TOTAL EXPENDITURES (IN 1970 $'s) AND DROPOUT RATE-NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
1970-1984

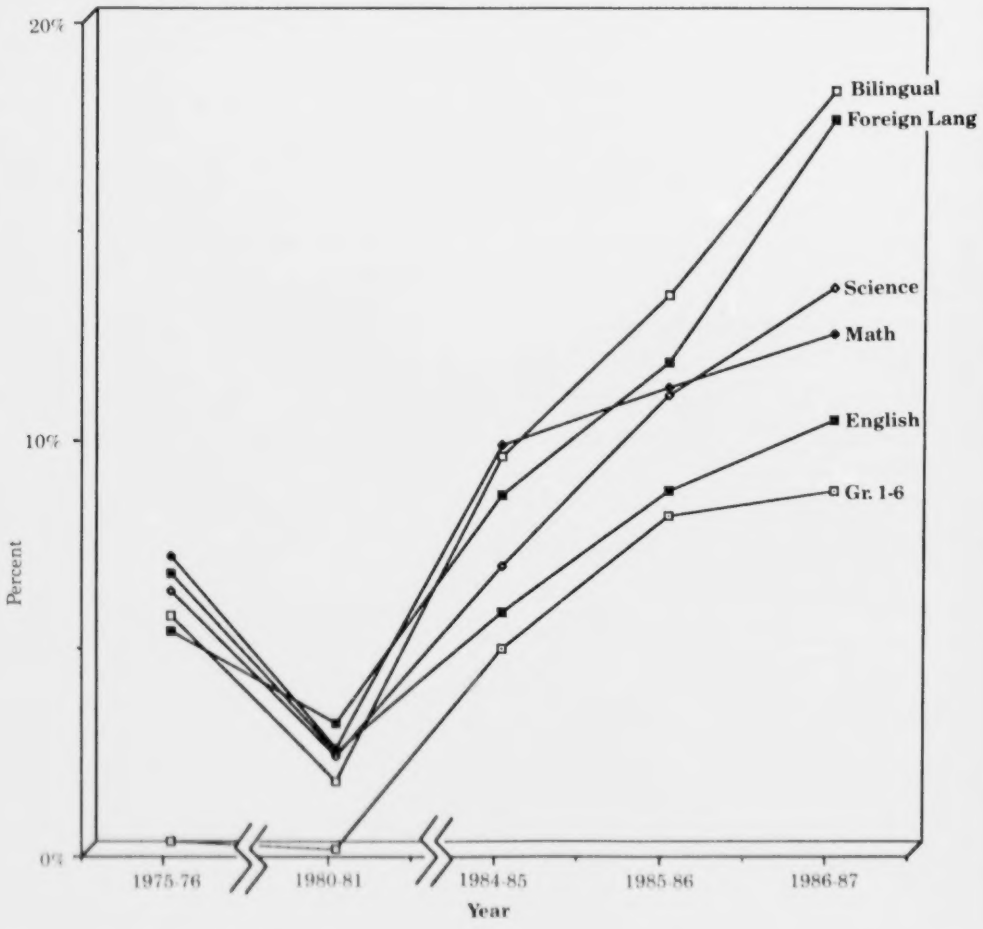


Prominent researchers gained credence with the notion that the quality of education really didn't matter because it did not overcome gaps in social-economic status.

The near-collapse of the auto industry showed how vulnerable traditional industries were.

EXHIBIT 5

PERCENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS TEACHING OUT OF CERTIFICATION IN SELECTED SUBJECTS
Selected Years 1975-76 to 1986-87
New York City



Standards Had Sagged

This was a dramatic change from the 1960's and early 1970's, a time of social and political turbulence and an unpopular war overseas. In that era, prominent researchers gained credence with the notion that the quality of education really didn't matter so very much because it did not overcome gaps in social-economic status among children. This was a period when standards sagged.

America's Competitiveness Questioned

Our society paid a heavy price for this attitude. That became clear as students' test scores began to slip in the late 1960's, with the declines continuing through the mid-1970's. As a nation, we began to be alarmed, but as always, the larger events and trends of our society really turned the focus to education. The near-collapse of the auto industry

showed how vulnerable traditional industries were in the face of lower-cost foreign competition. America's very ability to compete in an increasingly high-tech global marketplace was called into question. We looked at competitive nations and found a greater investment in education there than at home. Educational reform followed.

The Fiscal Crisis

In New York State, educational decline was exacerbated by a fiscal crisis in New York City. The crisis hit the City's recently decentralized school system particularly hard, with extensive layoffs of newly recruited teachers and a shrinkage of staff and faculty at City University. As total expenditures declined to New York City schools, dropout rates rose (see Exhibit 4). Qualified teachers were increasingly hard to find and the percentage of New York City public school teachers teaching out of certification began to grow (see Exhibit 5).

As the City and State struggled with immediate issues of survival, there developed a resurgent interest in establishing new standards and programs to reverse the broad decline reflected in test scores, including college entrance examination scores.

We looked at competitive nations and found a greater investment in education there than at home.

In New York State, educational decline was exacerbated by a fiscal crisis in New York City.

The crisis hit the City's school system particularly hard, with extensive layoffs of newly recruited teachers.

III. Regents/ Department Initiatives

Increasing State Resources to New York City Schools

The Department was a key player in two commissions during the period – the Fleischmann and Rubin Commissions – which conducted comprehensive reviews of State aid to schools and made recommendations concerning increased aid to New York City. Appendices A and B provide further detail on the findings of these commissions.

The Legislature did not enact many of the major recommendations of both commissions although the Regents continued to support them through their proposals on State aid to schools. Over the years some of these recommendations have been adopted including increased aid for New York City schools. Exhibit 6 shows the total State aid increases for New York City and New York State from 1978 to 1987. Over this period, New York City's public school enrollment was approximately 36 percent of the public school enrollment for New York State. The data presented show that the percent of State aid going to New York City public schools increased over the period and that the percent increases in State aid each year were greater for New York City than for New York State.

Testing for Standards

The Regents directed staff to conduct a thorough testing review in order to focus on standards for student competency and direct attention to empirical data on student performance. The goals of this review were to:

- *Require Regents Competency Tests* in reading, writing and mathematics as a condition for a high school diploma;
- *Better align assessment, instruction and inservice education* by developing criterion-referenced tests. The Department began a review of the curriculum that would further match these tests to State syllabi for coursework in the schools;
- *Develop a continuum of testing at key points* during elementary and secondary education which assesses students' progress toward developing the skills needed to meet the competency requirements for a diploma. These key points now include grades 3, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 11 or 12; and,
- *Require the provision of remediation* for students not showing satisfactory progress on all competency tests.

Reallocating Department Resources

The Resource Allocation Program targeted resources and technical assistance to New York City and other New York State schools with poor student performance for purposes of improving student achievement.

This initiative was a precursor to the comprehensive school improvement planning process used extensively in New York City after 1986.

The Department was a key player in the Fleischmann and Rubin Commissions which made recommendations concerning increased aid to New York City.

The Regents continued to support these recommendations through their proposals on State aid to schools.

Over the years some of these recommendations have been adopted including increased aid for New York City schools.

The Resource Allocation Program targeted resources and technical assistance to New York City and other schools with poor student performance.

The primary issue in (the Jose P.) lawsuit was the City's failure to evaluate and serve, in a timely fashion, those school-aged individuals who might be educationally handicapped.

EXHIBIT 6

TOTAL STATE AID INCREASE FOR NEW YORK CITY AND STATE WITH PERCENT INCREASE

School Year Beginning	New York City Total Aid (Thousands)	New York City Percent of State Aid	New York City Increase (Thousands)	New York City Increase Percent	New York City Percent of State Increase	State Total Aid (Thousands)	State Increase (Thousands)	State Increase Percent
1987	2,407,230	32.70	271,990	12.74	37.80	7,361,730	719,490	10.83
1986	2,135,240	32.15	214,235	11.15	33.43	6,642,240	640,898	10.68
1985	1,921,005	32.01	169,359	9.67	32.68	6,001,342	518,203	9.45
1984	1,751,646	31.95	269,155	18.16	44.38	5,483,139	606,481	12.44
1983	1,482,491	30.40	72,025	5.11	31.07	4,876,658	231,851	4.99
1982	1,410,466	30.37	144,046	11.37	38.69	4,644,807	372,314	8.71
1981	1,266,420	29.64	120,705	10.54	38.36	4,272,493	314,700	7.95
1980	1,145,715	28.95	133,132	13.15	37.46	3,957,793	355,351	9.86
1979	1,012,583	28.11	70,871	7.53	31.58	3,402,442	224,417	6.64
1978	941,712	27.88				3,378,025		

Children with Handicapping Conditions

- *Department commitment to New York City public schools.* The Office for Education of Children with Handicapping Conditions has continued to increase its commitment of both staff and resources to New York City during the period of 1977-1988. OECHC maintains its presence in New York City through its regional Office and the Office of the Division Director of Program Monitoring. Since 1977, regulatory site visits to determine compliance with both State and Federal laws and regulations regarding children with handicapping conditions have been conducted regularly in New York City.

- *Improving evaluation and placement of educationally handicapped students.* In February of 1979, a class action suit (*Jose P. vs. Ambach*) brought before Judge Eugene Nickerson of the Eastern District Federal Court on behalf of all handicapped students in the City school district, resulted in the New York City Board of Education being required under court order to revamp their special education evaluation and placement procedures. The primary issue in that lawsuit was the City's failure to evaluate and serve, in a timely fashion, those school-aged individuals who might be educationally handicapped.

In October of 1982, the Department conducted a survey to help the New York City Board of Education verify its claim that the City's waiting list for placement of students with handicapping conditions had been eliminated and to determine whether such students were being served in accordance with regulations and law. Department staff visited 447 schools and reviewed 14,490 individual student records during the course of the survey.

- *Expansion of monitoring and technical assistance to New York City special education programs.* Since 1977 the Department has increased its staff to expand monitoring efforts and follow-up visits to monitor progress towards compliance. The monitoring staff has increased its monitoring and technical assistance visits to New York City continually since 1977. For example, site visits have increased from 470 in 1984-85 to 920 visits in 1986-87. In 1986-87, New York City site visits represent over 40 percent of all monitoring and technical assistance visits to schools throughout New York State.

- *Increased training efforts in New York City.* The Department has also committed significant resources to training efforts in New York City. The Department has completed training for over 250,000 teachers, administrators, parents, board of education members, support personnel, agency representatives, Committees on Special Education and local school offices. Additionally, the Special Educator Support Program of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) has been funded since 1981 by the Department. This program is designed to help special and general education teachers to learn new instructional practices based on research on effective teaching. The program is staffed by a city wide network of skilled practitioners. This program was presented a Distinguished Program in Teacher Education Award in 1982 by the National Association of Teacher Educators.

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Since 1977 the Department has increased its staff to expand monitoring efforts and follow-up visits to monitor progress towards compliance.

The Department has also committed significant resources to training efforts in New York City.

Three New York City sites have addressed the expanded role of OVR in the schools.

During the 1986-87 project year, over 1,872 parents were assisted in obtaining services for their children and staff made over 9,559 follow-up contacts.

The Special Education Training and Resource Center (SETRC) network provides in-service training to parents, teachers, administrators, Board of Education members, support personnel, agency representatives, and other interested individuals. SETRC trainers develop and present training on specially designed topics based on local needs and statewide objectives. Centers have been funded in each of the boroughs in New York City since the 1979-80 school year with the exception of the 1982-83 school year.

- *Transition to employment or other services.* In 1984, the Cooperative Service Model project was established with funding and support from the Office for Education of Children with Handicapping Conditions (OECHC), the Office of Occupational and Continuing Education (OOCE) and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR). Each project is State funded for a period of three years in order to establish services, programs and transition linkages. Three New York City sites are currently receiving funding: Staten Island (year 3), Queens (year 2) and Brooklyn (year 1) and there are plans to add additional sites. The three New York City sites have addressed the expanded role of OVR in the schools, vocational assessments to determine individual student needs and teaching interviewing techniques to students. The enhancement and coordination of special education, occupational education and rehabilitative services brought about at the local education agency level through this project, has improved access of students with handicapping conditions to appropriate vocational assessment and programs.
- *Referral to early childhood programs and services.* The Department has supported and coordinated a network of Early Childhood Direction Center (ECDC) projects in New York City. At the present time there are four ECDCs in the New York City area with sites in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx. An additional site will be established in Staten Island this year. These projects are designed to assist parents and professionals in matching the individual needs of children with handicapping conditions, from birth to age five, to services within their region. In New York City during the 1986-87 project year, over 1,872 parents were assisted in obtaining services for their children and ECDC staff made over 9,559 follow up contacts to parents, agencies and professionals. Additionally, ECDC staff in New York City made 29 formal and informal referral agreements with tertiary and secondary perinatal center hospitals.

Teaching as a Profession

The Regents and Department undertook a major review of proposals to strengthen the teaching profession beginning with the establishment of a task force in 1975 by Commissioner Ambach to study the usefulness of competence-based teacher education. In 1977, the task force submitted its recommendations, and the Regents adopted in principle the concept of teaching as a licensed profession and instructed the Commissioner to review the feasibility of implementing this concept. The Regents approved a comprehensive report with specific recommendations in 1980 and submitted

legislative and budget requests to the Legislature beginning in 1981 for the following proposals:

- Teacher licensing and a State Board for Teaching with responsibility for professional discipline;
- Certification examinations;
- Required annual reviews of professional performance;
- Internships for first-year teachers; and,
- State funding for in-service education for school district and building professional personnel.

Directing Attention to New York City

- *The Regents New York City Project.* In 1977 the Regents and Department established the Regents Advisory Council to the New York City Project which has continued through the present day. Its charge was to formulate a strategy for improving the achievement level of New York City's public school students.

Its participants consist of 34 New York City groups representing educational, civic and governmental organizations, including the Chancellor's office, Borough Presidents' offices, the United Federation of Teachers, the National Alliance of Black School Educators, the Council of Supervisors and Administrators, the New York City Partnership, the Urban League, 100 Black Men, United Parent Associations, ASPIRA, the New York City Club, the Association of Superintendents and others.

Its accomplishments include:

- *Health Services.* The Council has been responsible for restoring some level of health services to the schools, for lengthening the hours that schools stay open and more recently for the promulgation of new regulations by the Chancellor of New York City Public Schools that mandate parental involvement in each school building
- *School Improvement.* It has, on two recent occasions, intervened to ensure the continuation of the school improvement process in New York public schools
- *A forum for resolving educational issues.* It has become a forum where the Regents, Department staff, and the New York City Chancellor and his staff can receive reactions, advice and constructive criticism on existing or proposed programs
- *Policy reviews.* At the request of the Regents, the Council has conducted in-depth reviews of policies and regulations such as teaching as a profession, the new Part 200 regulations, the Regents Action Plan, the ensuing new Part 100 Regulations and more recently the first edition of the Regents Working Paper on Increasing High School Completion Rates and the draft Regents policy statement on middle level education

The Regents Advisory Council charge was to formulate a strategy for improving the achievement level of New York City's public school students.

It has become a forum where the Regents, Department staff, and the New York City Chancellor and his staff can receive reactions, advice and constructive criticism on existing proposed programs.

A change in the formula for distributing Vocational Education Act funds targeted increased funds to cities.

The Department instituted coordinated team monitoring for the conduct of high school registration visits, as opposed to one-person visits.

The Regents New York City Project helped to direct attention to New York City school problems. As a result, there was an increasing presence in New York City of both Regents and Department staff. This was true of New York City-based Regents and staff and also of Regents and staff located outside of New York City. The involvement of Regents and staff in New York City school activities has continued to grow throughout the eighties.

Linking Schools with Employment

The Regents developed a policy paper on youth education and employment. This was the beginning of a strong Regents commitment to marshalling support for educational opportunity and accomplishment for at-risk children and youth.

Strengthening Bilingual Education

State aid for districts with approved programs for limited English proficient students began in school year 1981-82 in the amount of approximately $4.57 million. This aid has increased to approximately $19 million for school year 1987-88. Categorical aid for bilingual education also began in the late seventies and has increased to $8 million for State fiscal year 1988-89. The Department promulgated Part 154 of Commissioner's Regulations to administer the aid and to define program criteria for receiving aid. In July 1982 the Legislature enacted Chapter 827 which again authorized the aid and included many programmatic criteria defined in Part 154.

Directing Vocational Funds

A change in the formula for distributing Vocational Education Act funds targeted increased funds to cities. Vocational Technical High Schools in New York City successfully prepared students for college, advanced technical schools and specialized employment.

Monitoring New York City Schools

In school year 1979-80 the Department instituted a requirement for the registration of all New York State public and nonpublic high schools, including New York City, on a five-year cycle. In school year 1981-82, the Department established competency and retention standards for all high schools as a requirement for registration. During that same year, the Department instituted coordinated team monitoring for the conduct of high school registration visits, as opposed to one-person visits throughout the rest of the State. The purpose of the registration process is to determine compliance with all applicable laws and regulations governing secondary schools. The New York City teams, consisting of approximately nine Department staff persons, conducted extensive reviews of schools' compliance in the following areas: general education, compensatory education, bilingual and handicapped education. As a result of fiscal constraints, these teams were reduced to four staff members in school year 1985-86 who monitored bilingual, compensatory and handicapped education, and general compliance with laws and regulations.

IV. 1984 – Implementation of the Regents Strategy

Regents Action Plan

- *Equity and excellence.* Culminating in 1984, the Regents Action Plan to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results reshaped the requirements for elementary and secondary schools in New York State. The Regents Action Plan was prepared over a two-year period, incorporating much of the advice of thousands of educators, parents, business persons, school board members and others. Its major thrust was a simultaneous focus on strengthening equity and excellence in the educational system. The goals of the Action Plan[1] are to:

  - Ensure that *all* students have equal access to all activities in a school's program;
  - Ensure "greater equity in the distribution of funds and...[increase] general support for education;" and,
  - Provide a greater focus on:

    1. School improvement and accountability;
    2. Developing self-esteem in students with quality early childhood education;
    3. Secondary school completion and home/school/community partnerships to strengthen education;
    4. The transition from school to employment and further education;
    5. Strengthening teaching as a profession; and,
    6. Improving the effectiveness of learning through educational technology.

- *A focus on students, schools and teachers.* In the implementation of the Action Plan, the Regents have taken a three-pronged approach to educational reform by simultaneously focusing on students, schools, and teachers:

  1. *Students* are being required to complete additional courses and meet new, rigorous graduation requirements;
  2. *School districts* and nonpublic schools are required to make public an annual report of data on their students' performance on State competency tests and dropout rates;

     School districts and nonpublic schools identified as most in need of assistance by the State Education Department are required to develop and implement a comprehensive school improvement plan, approved by the Commissioner;

The Regents Action Plan was prepared over a two-year period, incorporating much of the advice of thousands of educators, parents, and others. Its major thrust was a simultaneous focus on strengthening equity and excellence in the educational system.

[1] Reference is made to the Regents Action Plan to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results in New York, March 28, 1984.

Since the 1984-85 fiscal year, the Legislature has enacted record increases in State aid to schools, an increase of more than $2.49 billion.

3. *Teaching* is strengthened by:

   A growing involvement of teachers in decisions related to the instructional program, such as in the cooperative "planning team" process of mandated comprehensive school improvement planning;

   Mandated annual local performance review of professional school district personnel;

   A mentor teacher-internship program in which first-year teachers are provided release time and the guidance of a mentor teacher for in-service activities; and,

   Statewide examinations for the provisional certification of teachers.

- *New resources for schools.* The Regents and Department emphasized the need for additional resources to implement the Action Plan. Since the 1984-85 fiscal year, the Legislature has enacted record increases in State aid to schools, an increase of more than $2.49 billion over the four years. This increase has included 34 new categorical programs that target resources to specific areas of need in Exhibit 7.

- *Targeting SED resources to schools in need.* The Action Plan represented a growing effort to identify schools with needs and directing resources to meet the needs. The Department has distributed the Comprehensive Assessment Report proposed in the Action Plan since 1985. It includes ten measures of student achievement and retention for each school building in the State. The CAR continues the Department's priority started in the mid-seventies to encourage educators to review and plan according to empirical data on student performance.

To ensure that this occurs for schools most in need of assistance, Commissioner's Regulations require that the CAR be used to identify such schools. The requirement that these schools develop and implement a comprehensive school improvement plan, approved by the Commissioner, provides a mechanism for directing Department staff and resources to schools with the greatest need.

EXHIBIT 7

RECENTLY-ENACTED CATEGORICAL AID PROGRAMS AND PROJECTED SCHOOL YEAR 1988-89 FUNDING

Program	Projected School Year 1988-89 Funding
Apprenticeship Related and Supplemental Instruction Program	$ 2,300,000
Declassification Support Services Aid	1,548,000
Early Grade Intervention (Big 5)	13,719,000
Educationally Related Support Services Aid	14,130,000
Excellence in Teaching (District) (BOCES)	157,390,000
Incarcerated Youth	5,000,000
Library Materials	6,120,000
Nonpublic Student Remedial Support Services Aid	11,500,000
Pupils with Compensatory Educational Needs	40,412,000
Speech Therapy Program	4,716,000
Summer School Program for Handicapped Children	52,430,000
Supplemental Support Aid	402,091,000
Urban-Suburban Voluntary Transfer Program	1,340,000
Vocational Education Equipment Aid	5,913,000
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome	1,165,000
Adult Literacy Education	3,500,000
Asbestos Hazard Abatement	5,000,000
Bridge to Employment	500,000
Comprehensive School Health Education Demonstration Program	1,250,000
Efficiency Study Grant Program	400,000
Employer Specific Skills Training Grant	2,000,000
Health Education and Services Network Program	800,000
Mentor Teacher-Internship Program	10,000,000
Parenting Education	1,000,000
Rural Dropout Prevention	1,000,000
School and Business Alliance	2,000,000
School As Community Sites	3,000,000
School Bus Driver Safety Program	250,000
Stay in School Partnership Program	3,500,000
Student Information Systems	9,000,000
Teacher Summer Business Training and Employment Program	4,400,000
Technologies Network Ties	5,000,000
Workplace Literacy	2,000,000
Youth at Risk	14,000,000
TOTAL	**$788,374,000**

The Comprehensive Assessment Report includes ten measures of student achievement and retention for each school building.

The CAR encourage(s) educators to review and plan according to empirical data on student performance.

Almost 400 public school buildings in New York City were identified by the Commissioner of Education as being among the schools most in need of assistance.

To address the magnitude and complexity of the problem of low performing schools, the State Education Department created the Office of Comprehensive School Improvement Planning in New York City.

Establishment of New York City Office of Comprehensive School Improvement

- *A focus on New York City school improvement.* In December 1985 almost 400 public school buildings in New York City were identified by the Commissioner of Education as being among the schools in the State most in need of assistance. To address the magnitude and complexity of the problem of low performing schools, the State Education Department created the Office of Comprehensive School Improvement Planning in New York City (CSIP-NYC) to work with the New York City Chancellor and Board of Education, community school boards and superintendents, professional organizations, and parent and community groups to develop and implement school improvement strategies. The appointment of a Deputy Commissioner to head this Office in August 1986 was meant to demonstrate to the educational community the intent of the State Education Department to make a serious and sustained commitment to achieving excellence and equity in New York City public schools.

CSIP-NYC is responsible for coordinating Federal and State resources for the purposes of implementing school improvement programs in public and nonpublic schools and for determining training and technical assistance needs of low performing school buildings in New York City (e.g., principal leadership training, teacher involvement and effectiveness, curriculum development, and exemplary program replication). To insure that school improvement plans are developed and implemented, CSIP-NYC staff make monitoring and technical assistance visits to schools and district offices.

- *Accomplishments.* The CSIP-NYC Office is now the primary agent through which the Department works to improve the quality of teaching and learning in New York City. The responsibilities of the office are immense, while the resources available to carry out these responsibilities are limited. During the first full year of operation, 1986-87, the CSIP-NYC was able to accomplish the following:

  - *Oversight of school improvement activities.* The Office has overseen the creation of school building planning committees and comprehensive school improvement plans in over four hundred public school

buildings in New York City. The response from administrators, teachers, parents, and students regarding institution of the comprehensive school improvement process has been overwhelmingly favorable. Over 5,000 persons from these groups are currently serving on planning committees. In a survey conducted by the State Education Department of over 1,100 staff of CSIP schools in May 1987, 77 percent of the staff interviewed felt that the collaborative planning process had had a strong positive influence in their schools and over ninety percent felt it had had a high or very high impact in improving school climate.

Comparisons of gain in test scores from 1983 to 1987 of CSIP schools, 79 percent of which were in New York City, and a similar size group of the next lowest performing non-CSIP schools, showed that CSIP schools made greater gains over the period than non-CSIP schools for grades 3 and 6 reading and math tests and the grade 8 administration of the Preliminary Competency Tests in reading and writing. Exhibit 8 shows the increases for these two groups on the grade 8 administration of these tests.

- *Development of comprehensive monitoring and compliance reviews.* The Office in collaboration with the Office of Elementary, Secondary and Continuing Education has developed strategies for comprehensive monitoring and compliance review activities in New York City. In the past each unit of the State Education Department that was responsible for monitoring and compliance activities conducted its reviews discrete from and uncoordinated with those of all other units. In the Fall of 1987, teams of SED personnel from Albany and the New York City office began to conduct coordinated, comprehensive visits. This strategy allows the Department to:

1. Streamline compliance and monitoring reviews by standardizing procedures, eliminating duplicate work, and creating a central computerized profile of programs in the schools and school districts visited;

2. Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of units' reviews through collaborative training, planning of visits and sharing of data and findings; and,

3. Make Department compliance review visits less intrusive for school and district office personnel.

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Principals' Centers, Project PLAN, Project LEAD, District-wide Staff Development Awards, and the annual City-wide and borough-wide conferences on school improvement are just some of the efforts that CSIP-NYC has been managing.

The Department has begun dialogues with many constituencies with which it has previously had minimal contact.

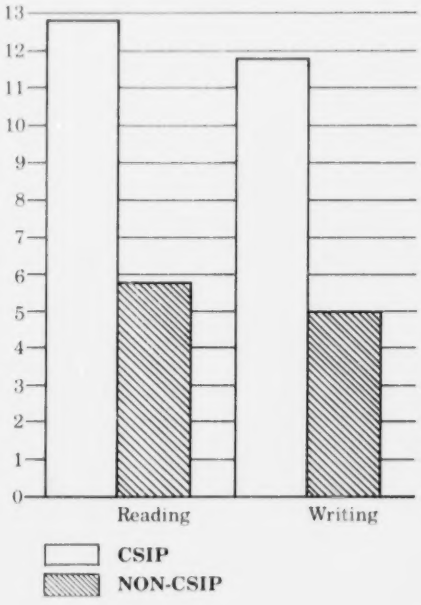
- *Programs for staff development.* The Office created numerous programs and opportunities for staff development in New York City. The Principals' Centers, Project PLAN, Project LEAD, District-wide Staff Development Awards, and the annual Citywide and borough-wide conferences on school improvement are just some of the efforts that CSIP-NYC has been managing.

- *Increase in the number of exemplary programs replicated.* The Office has increased substantially the number of exemplary programs that are being replicated in New York City. From kindergarten to high school, new programs are being pilot tested throughout the educational system.

- *Raised profile of the Department in the City.* The Office has dramatically raised the profile of the Department in the City. The Department has begun dialogues with many constituencies with which it has previously had minimal contact. New collaborative efforts with a broad spectrum of organizations have been initiated and dissemination of information regarding Department policies and programs have been expanded.

EXHIBIT 8

GAIN IN PERCENT OF EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS IN CSIP SCHOOLS AND IN A SIMILAR SIZE GROUP OF THE NEXT LOWEST PERFORMING NON-CSIP SCHOOLS SCORING ABOVE STATE REFERENCE POINTS ON PRELIMINARY COMPETENCY TESTS IN READING AND WRITING
1983-1987



1986: Educational Success for All – An In-depth Focus on Better Beginnings and Increasing High School Completions

By 1986, it became apparent that the dropout problem required a serious and intensive State effort. It was not expected that dropout rates would increase substantially, but that the present rate was intolerable in an age in which the lack of a diploma denies an individual the opportunity for meaningful employment or further education. As a result, the Department:

- *Conducted a comprehensive review of the research and practice* on better beginnings and increasing completions and prepared discussion papers for public comment;
- *Consulted with practitioners and researchers and held a series of regional conferences* in the fall of 1986 involving more than 3,000 persons interested in education in New York State; and,
- *Developed a strategy paper* on Increasing High School Completions for review by the Regents.

1987-88: Development and Review of Regents Working Paper, and Establishment of Commissioner's Task Forces and Regents Committee on New York City

- *Regents Working Paper on Increasing School Completions.* The Regents discussed the draft strategy paper at four of their monthly meetings and adopted the final version as the first edition of a Regents Working Paper on Increasing High School Completion Rates. As a working paper, the document was intended to elicit public comment and to be updated regularly as new knowledge about and strategies for increasing completion rates become available.
- *Regents working sessions on increasing completions.* In keeping with the intent of their Working Paper, the Regents elicited public comment on the strategy presented in the paper at fourteen small group "working sessions" throughout the State during fall 1987.
- *The Commissioner appointed four task forces* involving persons external to the Department to conduct reviews and make recommendations in four areas:
  - *The Department organization* to achieve its priorities. The task force presented its recommendations to the Commissioner and the Commissioner developed a reorganization plan. The Commissioner's plan calls

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The present rate was intolerable in an age in which the lack of a diploma denies an individual the opportunity for meaningful employment or further education.

The plan also calls for greater numbers of staff to be New York City-based.

In November 1987, the Board of Regents agreed to undertake a set of initiatives to provide the leadership necessary to make New York City schools again the preeminent urban education system in America.

The Science and Technology Entry program provides funds for grants of up to $200,000 for programs in school districts with high minority enrollment.

for several elementary and secondary offices involving approximately 90 staff members to report to the New York City Deputy Commissioner for school improvement. These include bilingual education, high school registration, education for children with compensatory educational needs, and upstate school improvement. The plan also calls for greater numbers of staff to be New York City-based. Recently approved by Division of the Budget, the reorganization plan has begun to be implemented.

- *Affirmative action policies* and accomplishments in the State Education Department and affirmative action practices in schools. The task force has submitted its recommendations and the Commissioner has begun implementing them. These include additional staff for the Affirmative Action Office and a detailed Department-wide recruitment and hiring plan.

- *The teaching profession.* The task force submitted its recommendations and the Regents and Commissioner are conducting six public hearings throughout the State on the teaching profession.

- *Education of children and youth at risk.* The Commissioner appointed a task force of educational and civic leaders from outside the Department to make recommendations to the Commissioner and Regents concerning a comprehensive, long-term strategy for improving the education of children and youth at risk. In addressing its charge, the Commissioner asked the task force to:

  1. Consider the needs of children and youth from birth to young adulthood;
  2. Specify categories of children and youth considered at risk, and review the factors which contribute to at risk conditions;
  3. Review and make recommendations concerning promising practices for at risk youth;
  4. Pay attention to those youth who need help now and to children who may become at risk;
  5. Develop an approach by which programs can be brought together in a comprehensive strategy both at the State and local level;
  6. Propose goals so that milestones of achievement may be identified and reached through the 1990's; and,
  7. Estimate the resources and legislation needed to accomplish these goals and a strategy for developing public and legislative understanding and support.

The recommendations of the Commissioner's Task Force are planned to be submitted in Fall 1988.

- *Regents Committee on New York City.* In November 1987, the Board of Regents, in consultation with the New York City Board of Education, agreed to undertake a set of initiatives to provide the leadership necessary to make New York City schools again the preeminent urban education system in America. The Regents appointed a Committee on the New York City Schools to review and make recommendations concerning governance, management and finance in the New York City school system. The Committee has agreed to focus their review on the State Education Department's role in these areas.

Other Important Regents/Department Initiatives in the 1980's to Improve New York City Schools

- *The Science and Technology Entry program* has provided funds for grants of up to $200,000 for programs in school districts with high minority enrollment to assist minority and economically disadvantaged secondary students in acquiring the skills necessary to pursue preprofessional or professional education programs of study in scientific, technical, and health related fields.
- *The Stay in School Partnership Program* has provided funds which supports cooperative efforts between school districts and institutions of higher education to reduce truancy rates and academic failure.
- *The School and Business Alliance Program* has provided funds for programs to provide employment, educational and postsecondary training opportunities for at risk students, and to expand the pool of competent workers to meet the needs of business.
- *The Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program* has provided funds for a cooperative SED-Department of Labor program to provide exploration and counseling to youth who are at risk of becoming school dropouts, unemployed young adults or youthful offenders.
- *Experimental prekindergarten programs* for disadvantaged four-year olds. Funding has been increased for this more than 20-year old program by $6 million for a total of $33 million for State fiscal year 1988-89. A State commission has been formed to study alternatives for providing a universal opportunity to attend prekindergarten education at public expense.
- *The Comprehensive Instructional Management System* program has provided funds to the Central Board for collaborative State and local planning of curriculum, testing and in-service education. This program requires considerable teacher participation and involvement in decision-making.

The School and Business Alliance Program provides funds for employment, educational and postsecondary training opportunities for at risk students.

A State commission has been formed to study alternatives for providing a universal opportunity to attend prekindergarten education at public expense.

The Schools as Community Sites program provides funds for pilot projects in elementary schools in economically distressed communities.

The Technology Network Ties/Student Information System program provides funds for the development, maintenance or expansion of student information systems.

- *Aid programs for pupils with compensatory educational needs* (PSEN and PCEN).
- *The Transferring Success Program* has provided funds to develop and replicate high quality, cost-effective approaches to improving school and pupil performance.
- *The Teacher Opportunity Corps* has provided funds to institutions of higher education with programs leading to permanent certification which provide enriched curriculum to prospective teachers concerning teaching at risk students.
- *Teacher Resource and Computer Training Centers* provided teachers and other school personnel with an opportunity to develop systematic, ongoing in-service training programs, assure the dissemination and application of educational research developments to classroom instruction and develop new curricular material specifically designed to meet the educational needs of the students served.
- *The Schools as Community Sites program* has provided funds for pilot projects in elementary schools in economically distressed communities, to provide education, social and recreational services to students and their families on an extended-day, extended-week, extended-year basis.
- *The Technology Network Ties/Student Information System* program has provided funds for the development, maintenance or expansion of student information systems in the Big Five cities and the rest of the State. The system is currently being piloted in New York City.
- *The Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention program* has provided funds to community school districts with low retention rates for dropout prevention programs.
- *Increased SED staff* will report to the New York City Deputy for Comprehensive School Improvement Planning in New York City under the Commissioner's reorganization plan and as a result of new positions approved for the 1988-89 State budget. Staff involved are in the areas of technical assistance and monitoring concerning comprehensive school improvement activities and compensatory education programs, bilingual education, civil rights and intercultural relations, high school registration, and middle level education. There has been an increased presence of Albany-based staff in New York City in these and other areas.

- *Promulgation of new regulations concerning the employment of uncertified teachers* including requirements that uncertified teachers be provided staff development including a mentor teacher advisor by the district and that the uncertified teacher be enrolled in a collegiate program leading toward certification at the expense of the district.

- *Collaborative staff development initiatives.* In recognition of the critical need for staff development programs for administrators and teachers, the Office of Comprehensive School Improvement Planning in New York City has been working in collaboration with local universities, research institutes and professional unions to develop such training programs.

The sum of the above initiatives represents a comprehensive strategy for educational reform in New York City. This strategy is organized by the Regents Action Plan and strengthened by the many separate initiatives mentioned above.

V. Problems and Challenges

Despite Regents and Department initiatives during the period 1977-1983, as stated above, some problem areas remained unaffected:

- *Challenging demographics:* A recent study[2] on Diversity in New York State studied differences among the five largest cities in New York State, other districts in New York State and other states. It found that the five largest cities in New York State were:

  - *Second in poverty in the nation.* The Big Five cities had 29.96 percent of children aged 5 to 17 living at or below the poverty level. Only one state appeared to have a higher proportion of 5 to 17 year olds at poverty levels according to the 1987 U.S. Department of Education report;

  - *Third in proportions of minority students.* In the Big Five cities, 71.84 percent of 5 to 17 year olds were identified as Hispanic or as members of a racial minority group. Only the District of Columbia with 96 percent and Hawaii with 77 percent showed proportions of minority students higher than the average reported for the Big Five cities; and,

Only one state other than New York appeared to have a higher proportion of 5 to 17 year olds at poverty levels.

Only the District of Columbia with 96 percent and Hawaii with 77 percent showed proportions of minority students higher than the average reported for the Big Five cities.

[2] Diversity in New York State. The University of the State of New York, The State Education Department, Albany, New York, February 1988.

The dropout rate in the 1970's increased particularly for the population of students needing bilingual education or English as a second language instruction.

Employers complained that so many high school graduates lacked the minimum basic skills necessary to perform their lowest level jobs that they were forced to review hundreds of applicants to fill a single position.

- *Third in the percentage of persons speaking a language other than English at home.* The Big Five cities had 33.28 percent of children aged 5 to 17 speaking a language other than English at home. In a comparison of 19 selected central cities, only two cities, San Antonio and San Francisco, had a higher percentage of persons speaking a language other than English at home than did New York City.

Children of the poor, minorities and from families which speak a language other than English at home have presented enormous challenges to the educational system. These groups have been disproportionately represented in the school dropout statistics. Statistics show that these groups have increased over recent years in New York City. Predictions are that these groups will continue to grow in New York State's Big Five cities over the coming years.

- *Dropouts:* During the New York City fiscal crisis in the 1970's, expenditures for public schools dropped and the dropout rate rose (see Exhibit 1). The dropout rate increased particularly for the population of students needing bilingual education or English as a second language instruction. This population has increased dramatically from the mid-seventies to the present due to a large influx of newly arrived immigrant students. The bilingual education system in New York City experienced overcrowded schools, the constant arrival of newly arrived students throughout the school year, and difficulty in recruiting properly trained teachers and retaining students in educational programs.

- *Preparation for employment:* Employers complained that so many high school graduates lacked the minimum basic skills necessary to perform their lowest level jobs that they were forced to review hundreds of applicants to fill a single position.

- *Facilities:* Educational facilities deteriorated in many New York City schools.

- *Building Trust:* All three partners in the educational process – the Governor and Legislature, Regents and Department, and the New York City school district – have to work at building trust. Important positive actions by the Governor and Legislature, the Regents and the State Education Department, and the Board of Education and local educators have occurred to improve New York City schools. Despite these, the conduct of the educational system has been characterized by sometimes considerable skepticism about the success of initiatives essential to the operation of New York City schools. Successes

in several areas are helping to reduce this skepticism and improve the way these three key players effectively conduct education as a collaborative enterprise. Examples of these successes are the following:

- *The DRP.* The Central Board adopted the Department's competency tests in reading – The Degrees of Reading Power tests – at every grade;
- *CAR reports.* The Chancellor adapted the Comprehensive Assessment Report to provide more detailed information on student performance in New York City public schools;
- *School improvement.* The Chancellor in consultation with SED has instituted rigorous requirements for schools concerning the identification of schools required to conduct comprehensive school improvement activities and has collaborated with the State Education Department in the provision of technical assistance to identified schools;
- *General education technical assistance.* Department and Board of Education middle management staff have developed a detailed plan for technical assistance to New York City public schools in general education areas; and,
- *CIMS.* The New York City Public School District has been a leader in use of the Department-sponsored Comprehensive Instructional Management System of collaborative, teacher-centered curriculum development.

- *School building accountability* was weak as a result of procedures that made the unit of fiscal and legal accountability the community school district or Central Board of Education. The State Education Department, Legislature and Governor did not have an accurate or complete picture of the circumstances of individual school buildings in New York City and did not demand accountability at this level. Data on student performance were neither disaggregated by school building or by important subgroups of students, such as minority groups, limited English proficient students or children with handicapping conditions, that have been underserved. As a result, the State Education Department has not been able to hold individual schools accountable for educating all students, and most particularly, those students at risk of school failure.

The conduct of the educational system has been characterized by sometimes considerable skepticism about the success of initiatives essential to the operation of New York City schools.

Successes in several areas are helping to reduce this skepticism and improve the way these three key players effectively conduct education as a collaborative enterprise.

School building accountability was weak as a result of procedures that made the unit of fiscal and legal accountability the community school district or Central Board of Education.

During the 1980's, the quality and quantity of the teaching work force became an increasing problem.

- *Teaching.* During the 1980's, the quality and quantity of the teaching work force became an increasing problem. As shown in Exhibit 2, the percent of public school teachers teaching out of certification in New York City public schools increased consistently since school year 1980-81 in a variety of subjects. As conditions in schools deteriorated and the complexities of students increased, schools resorted to hiring teachers without the proper credentials on a temporary basis. These teachers and their administrators needed the benefit of staff development activities more than ever, but the growing shortage of the teaching and substitute teacher work force prevented this.

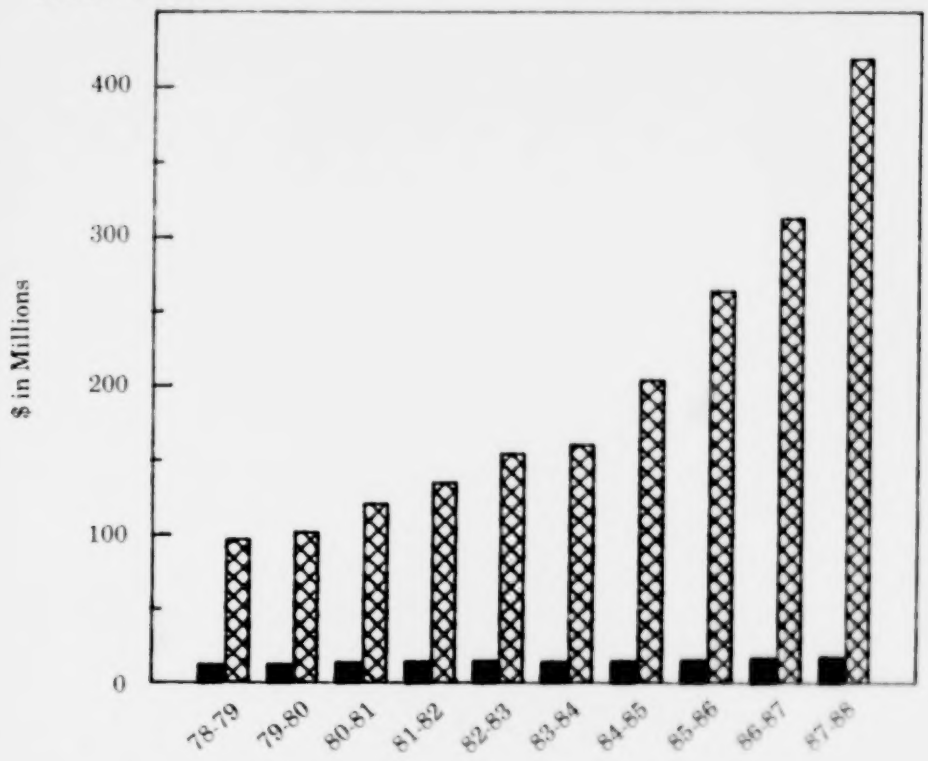
VI. Monitoring

The overall strategy contained in the Action Plan – increased responsibility and accountability for student performance with clearly stated goals and encouragement for local initiative and control – and the many separate initiatives listed above provided a good foundation in regulation, curriculum reform and reallocation of Department resources. These initiatives have been supported by the Governor and Legislature with record increases in operating aid for schools and considerable increases in funds for important local assistance programs for school districts. At the same time, there have been cutbacks in funds for State technical assistance and monitoring and certain important Regents proposals have not been enacted. This has been a major shortcoming facing successful implementation of the Regents and Department's program for New York City school improvement. This shortcoming has been addressed by the Regents and the Department in their budget, State aid and legislative proposals in past years and for 1988.

EXHIBIT 9

ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY AND CONTINUING EDUCATION STATE FUNDS

1978-79 – 1987-88



Comparison of State Funds Over Ten Years

State Operations

Aid to Localities

These initiatives have been supported by the Governor and Legislature with record increases in operating aid for schools.

The ten-year trend shows that the year-to-year increases in State operations have not kept pace with the increases in aid to localities.

Lack of Resources

During the past ten years, additional resources have been sought in the Department's budget request which would have provided additional State staff and support costs for program administration and monitoring and technical assistance to schools for Elementary, Secondary and Continuing Education (ESC).

Exhibit 9 shows the State funds provided in the budget on a yearly basis from 1978-79 to 1987-88 for ESC. The ten-year trend shows that the year-to-year increases in State operations have not kept pace with the increases in aid to localities. In addition, State operation funds were 11.5 percent of the total State funds (State operations and aid to localities) of $110 million in 1978-79. By

The number of State-funded positions decreased by 193 or 39.6 percent over ten years.

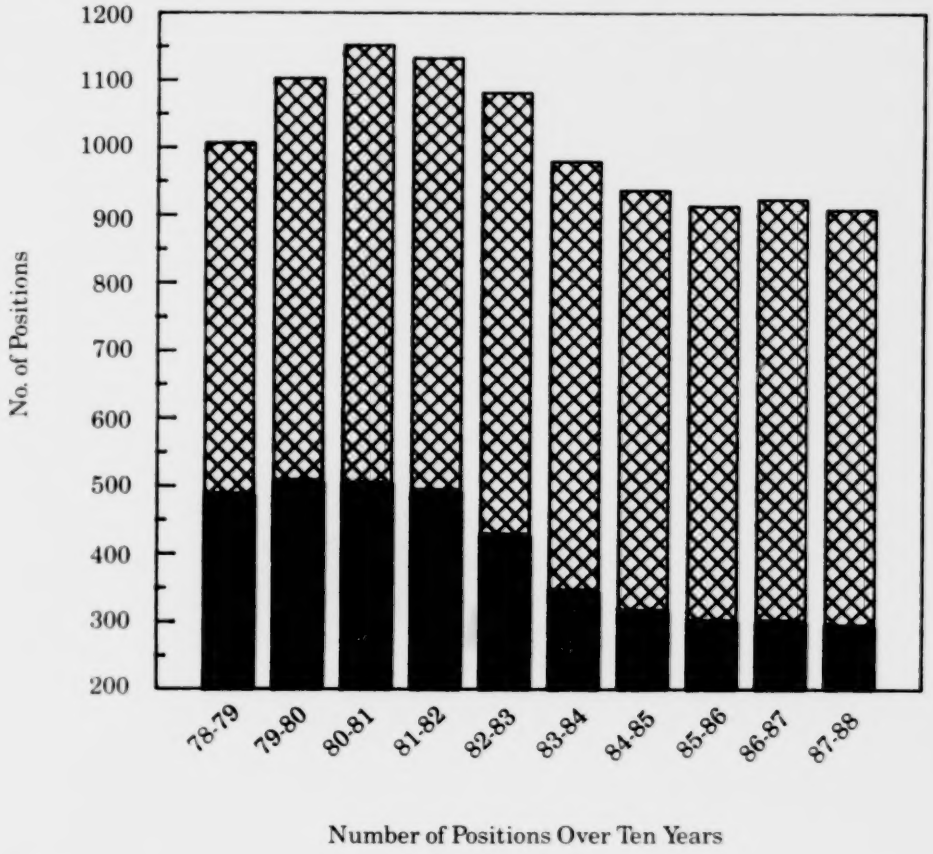
1987-88, State operations funds were only 4.1 percent of the total.

Exhibit 10 shows the number of filled positions in ESC including permanent and temporary positions funded with State and federal resources. In 1978-79, State-funded positions were approximately 48 percent of the total filled positions in ESC. In 1987-88, the State-funded positions dropped to 32 percent of the total. The number of State-funded positions decreased by 193 or 39.6 percent over the ten years from 1978-79 to 1987-88.

EXHIBIT 10

ANALYSIS OF STATE POSITIONS IN ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

1978/79 – 1987/88



1988 Proposals

- State/local support to provide a universal opportunity for all four-year olds to attend prekindergarten education programs ($52 m) and transportation ($20 m);
- State support for professional development to provide assistance in implementing the Regents Action Plan by way of Staff and Curriculum Assistance Centers ($6 m);
- PACE: State aid based on student poverty with increased school building accountability and rewards for educational success. The proposal combines PSEN, PCEN, Diagnostic Screening, Early Grade Intervention, and Attendance Improvement/ Dropout Prevention aid (more than $600 m); and,
- Funds to support increased State monitoring and technical assistance to schools to ensure accountability in the areas of school improvement including guidance, curriculum and testing, and establishing an education audit unit ($4.3 m).

Funds were requested to support increased State monitoring and technical assistance to schools to ensure accountability.

The Legislature responded by providing $2.4 million to hire up to 98 additional Education Department staff members for monitoring efforts.

VII. Legislative Response

The Legislature responded in April 1988 by providing $2.4 million to hire up to 98 additional Education Department staff members for monitoring efforts. A large number of those people will specifically monitor schools in New York City. Plans call for monitoring each New York City school once every two years.

The budget also includes an 8 percent increase in formula aid to local schools for 1988-89, bringing total State aid for public schools to just under $8 billion. This increase maintains the State's share of total costs for elementary and secondary education at between 44 and 45 percent. The State's share reached a low of 38 percent 10 years ago, and rose to 44 percent in 1986-87.

The Legislature enacted an increase of $5.5 million for a total of $30 million for the categorical prekindergarten program although it did not respond to the Regents proposal to provide a universal opportunity for four year olds to attend prekindergarten education. The Legislature approved a $1 million increase for a total of $16 million for Teacher Resource Centers although it did not approve the Regents proposal for district organized professional development. The Legislature enacted a large increase in State aid to schools. However, it did not approve the Regents PACE proposal aimed at increasing school accountability and the efficient use of resources for at risk children and youth by combining five categorical aid programs and targeting aid based on student poverty.

VIII. Next Steps

This Report deals with the past – the decade or so from the late 1970's to 1988. At present plans are being made for the future – the next period in the history of the State's involvement with New York City schools. The next steps will be drawn from the reports of the Regents Committee on New York City, the Commissioner's Task Force on Children and Youth at Risk, including the Commissioner's commitment to develop a multi-year plan for greater completions, the Commissioner's Task Force on the Teaching Profession, and aspects which concern practices in the schools of the Commissioner's Task Force on Affirmative Action Policies.

The Department will prepare a new document which draws on each of the above-mentioned studies and states long-term future directions concerning New York City and New York State. This report will detail a multi-year plan for school improvement in New York City.

This plan will include a strategic vision of what is to be done for New York City public schools. This vision will include a number of elements:

- To ensure that all pupils in New York City public schools participate in appropriate educational programs of high quality;
- To improve learning outcome for all pupils in the City of New York, regardless of their race, racial background, or handicapping condition;
- To reduce the high-school dropout rate and increase the number of high school graduates who go on to college study and/or gainful employment;
- To strengthen the value of the high school diploma as successful preparation for employment or higher education;
- To ensure school building accountability for the use of fiscal and other resources and for programs;
- To ensure that schools have the necessary resources and assistance to meet the challenges of economically disadvantaged students;
- To continue to foster and expand collaborative efforts with New York City school personnel;
- To develop a comprehensive, long-term policy and implementation strategy for educating at risk children and youth;
- To conduct research and continue to explore innovative programs to meet the special needs of New York City schools; and,
- To pursue strategies to strengthen teaching and the teaching profession.

The Department will prepare a new document which states long-term future directions concerning New York City and New York State. This report will detail a multi-year plan for school improvement in New York City.

APPENDIX A

FLEISCHMANN COMMISSION

The Fleischmann Commission Report was published in 1972 in three Volumes and was a textbook study of school finance and the state of education in New York. The school aid formula recommended is basically full State funding with leveling up to the 65th percentile of district expenditures and a statewide property tax. Additional weightings for pupils with special educational needs would be provided.

The Report expresses the deep concern of the Commission about the status of dropouts, non-English speaking pupils, drug abuse and the decreased performance of pupils from low income families.

The Report raises the question about New York City: "should (it) continue to be treated as a school district in school finance laws?" Or should funding be divided between New York City and the rest of the State dependent upon the elementary and secondary needs of both?

In Volume 3, Chapter 12 is devoted to "New York City: A Special Case." The major recommendations cover 12 pages. In essence, the Report states that New York City decentralization is a step in the right direction; they refer to "a system in deep trouble."

Budgeting in New York City according to Commission recommendations would be based on full State funding and those funds would be transferred by the State to community districts and the Central Board. Budget modification procedures would also be determined at the State level, with the State allowing districts maximum opportunity to determine their spending priorities and to alter their budgets after they are adopted.

To improve the State's fiscal monitoring capabilities over all school districts, the Commission has recommended the individual school be made a unit of accounting.

The Commission recommendations were regarded as a move to reduce local control and the leveling up of expenditures was regarded as the potential elimination of the so-called "light house" districts; as a result, the recommendations were ignored. In reality, the Commission recommendations would have provided equity in finance, improved educational opportunity and increased school building accountability.

APPENDIX B

RUBIN COMMISSION

The Rubin Commission Report and Recommendations focused primarily on State aid distribution formulas with very little reference to school district pupil and program performance. The most striking features of the suggested formula modifications which would have assisted New York City are as follows:

- Increase the operating aid ceilings;
- Increase the weightings for pupils with special educational needs and those with limited English proficiency;
- Provide all excess cost funding for the education of handicapped pupils; and,
- Provide aid for prekindergarten programs in operating aid.

The State aid formula for 1982-83 aid enacted increased the first tier operating aid ceiling from $1,650 to $1,685 and the second tier ceiling from $235 to $470. The district of average wealth would receive 49 percent of the first tier ceiling and 20 percent of the second tier ceiling. There were no changes in weighting for PSEN pupils and no change in LEP aid which was 5 percent of LEP pupils times selected aid per pupil. The aid enacted into law for 1982-83 largely ignored the Rubin Task Force recommendations because the recommendations in large part did not address the educational needs and equity goals New York State has strived to achieve since 1900.

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